

August 12, 2002

Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 47846
Olympia, WA 98504-7846

Washington State Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 42589
Olympia, WA 98504-2560

Washington State Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Washington State Office of Community Development
P.O. Box 48350
Olympia, WA 98504-8350

Re: Request for Increased Arsenic and Lead Health Monitoring

Dear Dr. Jude Van Buren, Department of Health
Ms. Ann Wick, Department of Agriculture
Ms. Linda Hoffman, Department of Ecology
Dr. Ted Gage, Office of Community Development:

As co-chairs of the Area-Wide Soil Contamination Task Force, we appreciate the opportunity to work with you to develop a statewide strategy for addressing low level lead and arsenic area-wide soil contamination in Washington. As you know, in recent discussions the Task Force has had repeated questions about the implications that elevated levels of arsenic and lead in soil may have for the health of Washington State residents. From these discussions, we understand that while there are data on potential risks from arsenic and lead, there are limited data on the actual health of Washington residents who, because of where they live, work, or go to school, may be exposed to elevated levels of arsenic and lead. We are concerned about this lack of exposure/health data for Washington residents, particularly with respect to children, who may be at greatest risk.

We encourage the Washington Department of Health, in partnership with other agencies as appropriate, to expand its use of blood-lead testing, fluoroscopy or any other appropriate techniques to gather additional information on the health of Washington

residents, particularly children, who may be exposed to arsenic and lead. We believe it is important that you look at both arsenic and lead, even as we recognize that the methodology for evaluating arsenic is still under development. We also believe that any studies should not be directed only at voluntary sub-populations, but be representative of all of Washington's residents who might be exposed to lead or arsenic in the soil. Appropriate use of random testing and finding ways of eliminating or minimizing the effects of confounding factors such as smoking and home remedies is also needed to give a better picture of how the health of Washington residents might be affected by lead and arsenic in the soil.

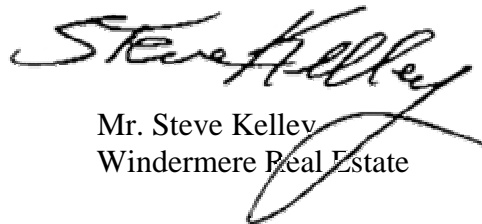
We encourage the other Chartering Agencies, as well as the Superintendent of Public Instruction office, to support the Department of Health as it seeks any needed funding and conducts these efforts, and to work in consort with local health departments as the State expands its understanding of possible exposure patterns.

Even as we recognize that such efforts may well be a multi-year effort, we ask that you please keep us apprised of your progress, so we can factor what you may learn into our deliberations as appropriate. We appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to continuing to work with you on this important project.

Respectfully,



Mr. Steve Gerritson
Sierra Club



Mr. Steve Kelley
Windermere Real Estate